

FAMILY TIES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE MUSLIM HOME.....	3
ADVICES OF HADRAT MAULÂNÂ ABDUL-HAFÎZ MAKKÎ SAHIB	9
ADVICE TO CHILDREN.....	11
BALANCING OF RIGHTS	16
ADVICE TO BOTH SPOUSES.....	20
ADVICE TO HUSBANDS.....	22
ADVICE TO WIVES	29
ADVICE TO PARENTS	37
ADVICE TO MOTHER-IN-LAWS.....	44
ADVICE TO DAUGHTER-IN-LAWS	46
RIGHTS OF NEIGHBOURS.....	49
FAMILY TIES.....	52
CONCLUSION	57

THE MUSLIM HOME

Allâh ﷻ states, 'And Allâh ﷻ has made for you in your homes a place of comfort.' [Surah Nahl]

A Muslim home is a place where family members can relate to one another and where they sincerely enjoy being together. Where they have a sense of shared beliefs and values, and their behaviour is based on Islâmic principles. It is also a place where family members are protected, happy and kind to one another. The home should not just be a place where people eat and sleep. The home is the place where families spend most of their time together, worship together and have a sense of belonging. The Muslim home is that which is based on the commands of Allâh, in which there is mutual love and in which one finds comfort and rest.

Today, very few Muslim homes possess these beautiful characteristics. In recent times there has been a marked increase in the following 1) separation and divorce 2) teenage problems 3) disagreements, tension and conflict among married couples and family members 4) the rate of depression, particularly among wives 5) wilful neglect of aged parents.

The main reasons for these problems are that we have left the teachings of Allâh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ and we have begun to adopt and imitate the culture and ways of others. The *dajjali fitnahs* (like the media, western education, etc.) portray a life of pleasures for those who will follow their path. However those who jump into this lifestyle will find misery, depression and a life of woes and internal agitation. At the same time, they portray a life of misery and hell for those who will adopt any other path. Those whose *îmân* is strong and have conviction that only in the way of Rasûlullâh ﷺ is complete success will fling themselves into this path and they will find peace,

contentment, inner satisfaction and a life of paradise in this worldly life. Rasûlullâh ﷺ has so beautifully stated, "The example of you and me is of a man who lights a fire. Moths and other insects begin falling into it, whilst he is trying to drive them away. I am holding firm onto your waists trying to save you from the fire whereas you are slipping from my hands."

It is of great importance to rid our homes of those things that teach us and our families disrespect, immorality, shamelessness and the evil character of the disbelievers like television, music, evil literature, novels, etc. and to restrict the use of the internet and cell-phone. *Ta'lîm* should be daily done in our homes. There is a section dealing with fulfilling of the rights of others in *Fadhâ'il-e-Sadaqât*. By *ta'lîm*, *anwârât* (light) will permeate our homes and the darkness of evil will be repelled.

Hereunder are some verses of the Qur'ân and Ahâdîth emphasising the importance of fostering good family relations, without which a home is a spectacle of hell.

1. Worship Allâh (*and do good solely for His pleasure*), **ascribe none as partner to Him and show kindness to parents, relatives, orphans, the destitute, near (related) neighbours, distant (unrelated) neighbours, the companion by your side (spouses and close associates), travellers and those (slaves) in your possession. Verily Allâh does not like the one who is proud and boastful (Therefore, one should stay away from such people).** [Surah Nisaa, verse 36]

2. So give the relative his right (*behave kindly with him and assist him wherever possible*), **as well as the poor and the traveller** (*all of whom should be assisted in every possible manner*). **This is best for those who seek Allâh's pleasure** (*because assisting Allâh's creation*

pleases Allâh greatly). These (people who fulfil the rights of others) are the successful people. [Surah Rûm, verse 38]

The rights due to relatives are greater than those owed to others and may not be ignored.

1. Hadrat Abû Hurayrah ؓ reports that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “Maintaining good relations with relatives creates love within families, prosperity in wealth and extension to life.” [Tirmidhî]
2. Hadrat Anas ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “The person who wishes to enjoy blessing in his sustenance and his life should maintain good family ties.” [Bukhârî]
3. Hadrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf ؓ reports from Rasûlullâh ﷺ that Allâh said, “I am Ar Raḥmân. I have created family ties and have extracted its name from my name (*Raḥîm* is derived from *Raḥmân*). I shall maintain whoever maintains it and shall sever ties with whoever severs its ties.” [Tirmidhî]
4. Hadrat Jubayr bin Mut’im ؓ reports from Rasûlullâh ﷺ that one who severs family ties shall not enter Jannah. [Bukhârî]
5. Hadrat Abdullâh bin Abi Awfa ؓ reports that he heard Rasûlullâh ﷺ say, “Mercy does not descend on people amongst whom is someone who severs family ties (when they do nothing to remedy the situation).” [Bayhaqî]
6. Hadrat Abû Bakrah ؓ reports that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “More than oppression and severing family ties, there is no sin more deserving of attracting punishment in this world together with the punishment due in the Aakhirah.” [Tirmidhî and Abû Dâwûd]

7. On the fifteenth night of Sha'bân, Allâh ﷻ emancipates from Jahannam people numbering as many as the hairs on the goats of the Banu Bakr tribe. However, Allâh does not look at the one who severs family ties and the one who disobeys his parents.
[Bayhaqî]

It must be borne in mind that maintaining good family ties should not be done only when the opposite party does the same, because this is really compensation. True maintaining of family ties is fostering them with those who sever them. Note the following Ahâdîth:

8. Hadrat Abdullâh bin Umar ؓ narrates that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "The true maintainer of family ties is not one who only gives back what he receives, but he is one who joins ties when they have been severed." *[Bukhârî]*
9. Rasûlullâh ﷺ also said, "Join ties with those who sever ties with you, be good to those who are not good to you and speak the truth even though it may be against your own self." *[Jâmi'us Saghîr]*
10. Hadrat Abû Hurayrah ؓ reports that a man once came to Rasûlullâh ﷺ, saying, "O Rasûlullâh ﷺ! I have relatives who sever ties with me whenever I join ties, who are bad to me when I am good to them and who behave foolishly with me when I am most tolerant towards them." Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "If what you say is true, then it is as if you are sprinkling sand on them and as long as you do this, there will always remain an angel with you to assist you." *[Muslim]*
11. Hadrat Sa'îd bin Al 'Âs ؓ reports that Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "The rights that the elder brother has over the younger brother is like the rights of a father over his son." *[Mishkât]*

12. Hadrat 'Alâ Ibn Khârijah ؓ narrates that Nabî ﷺ said, “Learn about your lineage so that you will be able to maintain family ties.”

Maximum benefit will be attained and the intended purpose of this publication would be achieved if this **GOLDEN PRINCIPLE** is kept in mind:

Strive towards fulfilling the rights due to others, rather than being concerned with the fulfillment of your own rights. If every person sincerely commits themselves to fulfilling the rights of others and overlooks the non-fulfillment of their own rights it will lead to greater mutual harmony. Constantly reminding others to fulfill your rights may only lead to discord. Nabî ﷺ said, “Fulfill the rights upon you and ask Allâh ﷻ to fulfill the rights due to you.”

The Qur'ân and Ahâdîth normally use the words ‘*dhawil-arhâm*’ or ‘*dhawil-qurba*’ when referring to the family members whose rights we should fulfil. This implies the following relations/people:

a.)Members of your father’s and mother’s family e.g. grandfather, grandmother, great-grandfather, great-grandmother, father’s and mother’s brothers and sisters and their children, grandchildren, father’s uncles and aunties and their children, grandchildren, etc.

b.)Members of your wife’s family e.g. father-in-law, mother-in-law, brothers, sisters and their children etc.

From these, the parent’s rights are foremost.

(NB. A person has to observe *pardah* from those family members who are of the opposite gender. The *sharî’ah* has declared that mingling with them could lead to great harms e.g. cousins of the opposite gender, brother/sister-in-law, uncles’/aunties’ spouse. If they are in need, then through means of family members of the same gender, you could assist them to fulfil your right of family ties.)

Enjoining family ties is *wâjib*, even if it be by *salâm*, *du'â*, giving of gifts, assistance, sitting and talking together, being kind to them, visiting them often (or at least phone them once in a while) to increase love and not to refuse to fulfil their needs if you are able to do so.

*May Allâh ﷻ grant us the ability to fulfil this great command of His.
Âmîn*

In this booklet, we will be discussing a few close relationships and the rights and demands affixed with them. Insha-Allâh, if we follow these guidelines, we will find a happy and prosperous life in this world and great success in the hereafter.

ADVICES OF HADRAT MAULÂNÂ ABDUL-HAFÎZ MAKKÎ SAHIB

DÂMAT BARAKÂTUHUM

In our modern lives, the environment in our homes has become corrupted. Instead of mutual love, there is fighting, disagreements, etc. My understanding is that the basic cause of this is that the sicknesses of the heart are many. There is jealousy, hatred and desire for greatness. May Allâh ﷻ grant the ability that this message be made common that the youth, women and men should establish a contact with some saint so that the desire to reform themselves can be created, thus saving themselves from being destroyed. Shaytân comes to a person and creates pride, jealousy, vanity and show. He sows seeds of enmity and hatred amongst one another. By this, dislike and disagreement is created amongst people. The love between husband and wife, brother and sister, and family members which was supposed to be there is thus terminated. So, this is the basic solution.

Together with this, we should also make effort to correct our environment at home. Generally we find television, music, etc. in our homes. There is darkness and evil in this. By these things, darkness is created and then the nature of people is automatically propelled to commit sin. You must have heard this term that the environment is polluted. Where there is an abundance of factories, there is a lot of smoke and smog. The environment thus becomes polluted. For this reason, when people go into the jungles and mountains, they say that the air is very fresh and enjoyable there. This is because the pollution which is found in the cities is not found here. The 'ulemâ and mashâyikh state that just as there is physical pollution of smoke, etc. there is also pollution caused by sins. When in our homes there is television, music, immorality and shamelessness, then our environment becomes (spiritually) polluted. Sinning and the desire to commit sins is now created. Enmity is created amongst people. The love, sincerity and humility

which people are supposed to possess for Allâh ﷻ's pleasure comes to an end. Therefore it is necessary that we have a good environment at home.

Also, create the quality of tolerance. Create mutual love and affection. Learn to control your tongue. If every person makes an effort that no such word should emit from his mouth which will cause hurt to anyone, which will create hatred and which will create enmity, then Insha-Allâh, there will not be bickering and fighting. Today, every person blames the next. The other person said this, he did this, etc. No one thinks about himself. If you go to the wife she complains about the husband, "He said this, he did this." and vice versa. I remember when I was by Hadrat Maulânâ Yûsuf Saheb, in whose company Allâh ﷻ granted me the ability to stay for a long time. He used to say one amazing thing, "Today is a time of great freedom. Everyone is talking of receiving his rights. No one talks of fulfilling rights."

Every person says, "I did not receive my rights." This is the basis of all evil and destruction. Everyone is concerned that his rights must be fulfilled but has no concern to fulfil the rights of others, whereas the basic teaching of Islâm is that you should have the concern whether you have fulfilled the rights of others. The husband should have the concern that I must fulfil the rights of my wife. The wife should have the concern that I must fulfil the rights of my husband. I should not utter something which will cause the other grief, which will cause the heart of the other person to break and which will cause inconvenience to the other. No action of mine should cause difficulty and inconvenience to the other. Insha-Allâh if we all think like this, then our fights will come to an end. This is very easy. May Allâh ﷻ grant us all the ability!

ADVICE TO CHILDREN

Allâh ﷻ emphatically enjoins man to be dutiful to his parents in the Noble Qur'ân. In several places in the Allâh ﷻ mentions obedience to one's parents after commanding His servants to worship Him alone. So worshipping Allâh ﷻ, without ascribing partners to Him, which is the greatest sin of all, is connected to honouring one's parents. Therefore this duty is not to be taken lightly. Allâh ﷻ states, "Your Sustainer has decreed that you worship none but Him and that You be good to your parents. If one or both of them reach old age by you, 1) do not even say *uff* to them (even if you have to clean their excreta since they did so for you when you were tiny), 2) nor reprimand them (in the state of anger, and never raise your hand on them), 3)but address them with terms of honour (kindly, politely, with respect and do not address them by their names), 4) Lower unto them the wing of submission because of mercy (be humble towards them in your actions) and 5) say 'My Lord! Bestow on them mercy as they brought me up when I was young.' (Make *du'â'* for them during their life and after their demise. Some elders have mentioned that we should make *du'â'* for them at least five times daily.) Allâh ﷻ knows well what is in your hearts. If you are pious, then He is All-forgiving to those who turn in repentance continuously to Him. (If you have any shortcomings, but your intention is good, Allâh ﷻ will forgive you. Also, we can never fulfil the rights of our parents. Therefore, we should always seek forgiveness for this.)"

The following Ahâdîth clearly show the great rights of parents, the rewards of serving them and the harms of disobeying them.

1. Service to parents result in increase in sustenance and in longer life.
2. Service to parents is superior to jihâd.

3. By rendering service to parents, one obtains the reward of a hajj, 'umrah and jihâd.
4. Service to parents is amongst the noblest acts by Allâh ﷻ.
5. A mother's *du'â'* for her children is accepted with swiftness.
6. A gaze of love and mercy cast at parents is the equivalent of an accepted hajj.
7. Jannah lies under the feet of your mother.
8. The best door to Jannah is the father. Either guard it or destroy it.
9. The pleasure of the parents is the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and the displeasure of the parents is the displeasure of Allâh ﷻ.
10. Looking with anger at one's parents is disobedience to parents.
11. Disobedience to parents is among the major sins.
12. He who is disobedient to parents will be disgraced. (This curse is mentioned thrice.)
13. Abusing parents is among the major sins, even the utterance of a harsh word or a word of disrespect.
14. The one who troubles his parents will be punished here on earth (in addition to the punishment in the hereafter).
15. The doors of Jahannum are open for the one who disobeys his parents.

16. Jibra'il عليه السلام cursed offspring who displease their parents in their old age.

17. Neither the *nafl* nor *fard* worship is accepted of a person who is disobedient to his parents.

18. A murderer of parents will be among the worst punished in the hereafter.

19. The one who disobeys and displeases his parents will not enter Jannah (directly).

20. Allâh ﷻ curses the one who displeases his parents.

After studying these narrations, can it ever be expected of a Muslim to swear, abuse, or beat his parents; to dump them in an old-age home; to break off contact or act funny with them because of one's wife's complaints against them? A woman's duty after marriage is first to the husband followed by her parents but a man's first duty will always be to his parents.

Remember how your mother carried you in her womb for 9 months bearing pain upon pain, bore you, spent every moment when you were a baby looking after you, only sleeping after you slept, eating after you ate, staying awake all night when you were ill and taught you how to walk, speak, eat and how to live.

Remember how your father made great efforts to work so that he could see his children in the best condition, how he played with you after a tiring day's work and how he always gave preference to your desires over his.

Hereunder are the etiquettes to be accorded to our parents:

- ❖ Never be disrespectful to parents. Do not say a harsh word to them.
- ❖ Even if they are unjust, it is not lawful for children to ill-treat, disobey or displease them.
- ❖ Obey them in all lawful things. If they instruct you to do anything which is unlawful in the *shari'ah*, then politely decline. Never refuse or argue.
- ❖ When parents abuse, scold or even beat their children, they should submit to such treatment with humility. Never should they utter a word of disrespect or complaint, nor should they display on their faces any indication of anger or disgust. Bear their treatment in silence and with patience.
- ❖ Assist them in all lawful ways, even if they are not Muslim.
- ❖ Whenever you see them, greet them.
- ❖ If you live with them, take permission before going anywhere. Notify them of your location.
- ❖ Do not call them by their names. Address them with titles of respect and honour.
- ❖ Pay the debts of your parents (after their demise, and if they are unable whilst alive).
- ❖ If they had made any lawful bequest, fulfil it if you have the means to do so.
- ❖ After their death, continue making *du'â'* of forgiveness for them. Within your means, practise virtuous deeds with the intention of the reward being granted to them by Allâh ﷻ.
- ❖ Be kind, respectful, and helpful to the friends of your parents (more so after their demise).

- ❖ When entering the private room of your parents, seek permission before entering.
- ❖ Always be cheerful in their presence. Speak kindly and tenderly to them.
- ❖ When speaking to them, keep your gaze low. Do not stare them in the face.
- ❖ Do not raise your voice above the voice of your parents.
- ❖ When walking with them, walk slightly behind them, not in front nor on their sides.
- ❖ Even in their absence speak highly and respectfully of them.
- ❖ Do not give preference to your wife over them. *(This does not apply to the rights of the wife. Where parents instruct the son to discard or violate the obligatory rights of the wife, it is not permissible to obey them.)*
- ❖ Always endeavour to keep them happy.
- ❖ Do not embark on a journey without their permission.
- ❖ When they question you, do not inconvenience them by delaying in your reply.
- ❖ It is highly disrespectful to abstain from answering them.

[Etiquettes extracted from Âdâb ul Mu'âsharat by Hadrat Moulânâ Thânwî رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ]

BALANCING OF RIGHTS

Allâh ﷻ says: “*Verily Allâh ﷻ commands you to fulfil trusts to their rightful ones, (and Allâh ﷻ commands you) to decide with justice when you decide among people.*”

Two commands are understood from this verse, viz.

- 1.) It is incumbent to discharge the obligatory rights of people.
- 2.) It is not lawful to destroy or fail in discharging the rights of one person for the sake of the rights of another person.

Some unscrupulous persons - experience has shown that there are numerous such persons – who are extreme in neglecting the rights of parents that they totally ignore the *sharî’ah’s* commands pertaining to the compulsion of obedience to parents, thus invoking calamities on themselves. On the other hand, some pious people adopt the other extreme whereby their obedience to their parents is of such a degree which leads to destruction of the rights of others, e.g. the rights of their wives and children. A third group of people fulfil the rights of all groups of people. However, they consider optional duties to be compulsory. At times, they are unable to fulfil these non-incumbent duties, which results in frustration. Eventually they believe that the *sharî’ah* has imposed unbearable burdens on man, and in this way ruin their *dîn*. In this way these people destroy the rights of their own *nafs* (self), which also has rights over one as Nabî ﷺ has stated, “*Verily your nafs has a right over you.*”

Among the compulsory rights, the protection of one’s *dîn* has priority. The fulfilment of non-obligatory rights of parents with the attitude described above, sometimes leads to sin. Thereafter frustration will set in. If correct knowledge is acquired and then one sets about in fulfilling these actions, then he will be saved from these harms. In short, there is great wisdom in having knowledge of the laws of the *sharî’ah*.

Here, several important *masâ’il* (laws) are mentioned:

1.) It is not lawful to obey parents if they order their children to discard an act or duty which is obligatory on them (children) according to the *sharī'ah*. Obedience in such cases of conflict is not at all permissible, leave alone the idea of obedience to them in these cases where their orders violate the *sharī'ah*.

The following cases come within the ambit of this rule:

✽ The man's financial condition is such that if he provides assistance to his parents from his money, his wife and children will be reduced to misery (i.e. he will not be able to fulfil their necessities, not luxuries-compiler). His income is not sufficient to provide for his parents as well as his family. In this case, it is not permissible for the man to impose hardship on his wife and children by spending on his parents.

✽ It is the right of the wife that she demands (if she wishes) to live apart from the parents and relatives of the husband. Thus, should the wife invoke this right and the parents insist that they (the son and daughter-in-law) live with them (parents), it will not be permissible for the husband to accede to the demands of the parents in this case. It is compulsory in this case of conflicting demands to give to the wife a separate place of residence.

[If you are unable to provide a separate house altogether, at least provide her a separate room in a big house. This room should be sufficient to meet her basic needs and she must be able to keep her personal effects in this room under lock and key. The room must allow her such privacy that she is freely able to converse and spend time with her husband. This is sufficient to fulfil the requirements of her wâjib (compulsory) rights. Her stove (kitchen or cooking area should definitely be separate. In most cases, the fire (of dispute) commences from this very place.]

[Islahe-Inqilâb-e-Ummah by Hadrat Moulânâ Thânwî رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ]

✽ If parents prevent their children from setting out from hajj and the acquisition of necessary Islamic knowledge (which is *fard* on one), then it is not permissible to obey their wishes.

2.) It is not permissible to obey parents in anything which is unlawful in the *sharī'ah*, e.g. they order that the children take up such employment which is not lawful in Islām or they wish their children to participate in unlawful functions (e.g. engagement and wedding functions), gatherings (wherein there is intermingling of sexes), customs and innovations. (Included in this is their command for the children to abstain from the compulsory actions like *salâh*, etc. and not to observe *pardah* from strange men/women, cousins, brother-in-laws, etc.)

3.) The rule pertaining to such acts which are *mubâh* (permissible-not obligatory nor prohibited). If parents command their children to render or abstain from permissible acts, then the circumstances will have to be taken into consideration. If one is dependent on something and refraining there-from will mean hardship, then obeying one's parents who refuse permission, will not be incumbent. One is allowed to embark on the task e.g. a poor man is unable to find employment locally decides to travel elsewhere to seek his living, but his parents refuse him permission to go. In this case, it is not obligatory to obey the wishes of his parents. However if the intended work (i.e. which is permissible) is not essential and one is not dependent on it or there is great danger involved in doing it or due to the son's absence the parents will be put into hardship because of no suitable arrangements being possible for their care, then it is not permissible to oppose the wishes of the parents, e.g. participation in a non-obligatory war (even if it is *fard-e-kifâyah*), or a sea voyage or departing without being able to make arrangements for the care of the parents. In this case, the journey not being essential, it is obligatory to obey the parents. On the contrary, if there is no danger in the journey nor will the son's departure bring about hardship upon his parents because adequate arrangements exist, then it will be permissible to participate in that work or journey even if parents oppose.

[Dangerous journeys are those pertaining to jihâd and sea voyages. If there is no danger in the journey then it is permissible to depart on the journey without their permission except when great hardship will descend on them if the children depart. If there is no danger in the journey then one may go on journey for trade, hajj and 'umrah even without their permission. Similarly the permission will apply to a greater extent for a journey in pursuit of Islâmic knowledge (Shâmî)]

Although it is permissible, nevertheless, it will still be *mustahab* (commendable) to respect their wishes in this case too.

The following will come within the scope of this rule

✽ Parents wish their son to divorce his wife without having any real grounds. It is not compulsory to obey the parents even if his refusal to divorce her causes great displeasure to his parents, since in divorcing her, he will be afflicted with great harm.

✽ If the parents order that the son hand over his entire earnings to them, it is not compulsory for him to obey their wishes in this regard. Should parents compel their children to hand over their earnings, they (the parents) will be sinful. The hadîth stating ‘You and your wealth belong to your father’ applies to times of need. Should the father take from the son’s wealth more than his basic requirements, it will be a debt on him. If he refuses to pay here, he will have to pay in the hereafter.

[Abridged from: *Hayâtul-Muslimîn* by Hadrat Moulânâ Thânwî رحمہ اللہ]

ADVICE TO BOTH SPOUSES

The family is the nucleus of an Islâmic society and marriage is the only way to bring families into existence. A healthy Muslim society depends on a sound Islâmic environment. Happy couples make happy families, who make healthy societies. The union of two souls is the fibre which weaves society together. For this reason, Nabî ﷺ emphasized the importance of appropriate conduct after marriage so that it endures and becomes the 'coolness of the eyes', in the words of the Qur'ân.

A happy marriage is not made in heaven, nor does it flourish on its own. It has to be continually nurtured and preserved. Marriage can be a source of enormous tranquillity, yet it can also become a root of the greatest pain, sorrow and heartbreaks. Once two people have committed themselves to each other they should move mountains in order to stay together. It takes time and effort to blend two lives. Many marriages do not last because partners take the view that if it does not work, they will simply end the marriage. This shows lack of commitment, a lack of drive and is deficient by nature. This marriage is almost doomed from the start.

Marriage is very similar to constructing a building. It requires a strong foundation that can withstand the storms and shocks of stress. The adhesive that binds couples together is love and mercy. By acting on the following guidelines, Inshâ-Allâh, our marriages will become more enjoyable, love will increase and we will attain success in both worlds.

- ❖ Always make *du'â'* for one's spouse and for a happy marriage.
- ❖ Adopt *taqwa* (Allâh consciousness) and be mindful of your duties to Allâh ﷻ at all times, as piety is the stepping stone to a beautiful moral and spiritual character.
- ❖ Create an Islâmic environment at home, as this will bring peace and serenity in your lives.

- ❖ Do not be concerned with fulfilling your own religious duties only. It is your religious and moral obligation to encourage your spouse and children towards their Islâmic duties with love, wisdom and patience.
- ❖ Acquaint yourself with the reality and responsibilities of marriage. Remember that marriage is not only fulfilment of carnal desires but fulfilment of responsibilities.
- ❖ Under no circumstances should you compel your spouse or children to obey you in any act that contravenes the commands of Allâh ﷻ. At the same time, you should not succumb to the un-Islâmic dictates of your spouse and children.
- ❖ If any problem or dispute arises in the marriage, then always turn to Allâh ﷻ for guidance first. If the problem persists, consult a pious experienced elder or 'âlim for advice.
- ❖ Live simply. Don't be jealous of those who seem to be living a more luxurious life than your family. Sustenance is from Allâh ﷻ. In order to inculcate contentment, look at those people who have less than you, not those who have more than you.
- ❖ Be mindful of your discussion topics. Never discuss things with others about your marriage that your spouse would not like to discuss, unless there is an Islâmic reason to do so. Some husbands and wives, believe it or not, complain to others about their spouse's physical appearance. This is a recipe for disaster. Information about your intimate relations should be kept between you and your spouse.
- ❖ As far as possible, try to have meals together as a family. Express your appreciation, whether the cook is the husband or wife. Rasûlullâh ﷺ would not complain about food put in front of him. Do not look for faults.
- ❖ Exchange gifts. This creates love.

ADVICE TO HUSBANDS

Allâh ﷻ says, “For them (women) are rights similar to those on them according to the beautiful standard.” Man is told that as there are rights due to him, his wife also has rights due unto her.

Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “The best among you are those who are best towards their wives.” [Tirmidhî].

- When entering the home, always make salâm cheerfully, no matter how difficult your day may have been. A hadîth states that when a man enters his home cheerfully, Allâh ﷻ creates an angel who seeks forgiveness on his behalf as a result of his happy attitude.
- Similarly, when leaving home in the morning, make a point of kissing your wife and don't leave without *salâm*. *Salâm* is a means of engendering great love and happiness in the home.
- Implement the beautiful *sunnah* of smiling. Smile more and frown less. Express this virtuous act of smiling to your wife often, and not only outside to strangers. Smiling is an act of charity. *Try and create such a loving presence at home that your family members look forward to see you, rather than hoping you never come home.*
- Support and spend generously on your family, *according to your means*. Regard this as an Islâmic responsibility, not as a favour upon them, nor as a burden on you.
- Spending on bare necessities is not sufficient to engender true love and a happy home. However, be moderate in your expenditure- there should be neither wastage nor miserliness.

- Shower your wife with gifts (within means). Never remind her of favours you confer on her.
- Provide her with her own monthly allowance (according to means) over and above your household budget expenses. This money will then **belong to her**, thus allowing her freedom of choice to purchase items for her personal needs, without having to account how it was spent.
- Compliment your wife's cooking after meals. Overlook the little shortcomings, e.g. if the salt is less or if the food is not prepared on time, for some reason beyond her control.
- Endeavour to eat and drink from the same utensil. Sometimes place a morsel of food in each other's mouth (not only to be practised when newly-wed), this will increase mutual love. One will be rewarded for this.
- Do not disclose your wife's secrets or faults to either family members or friends. Always conceal one another's faults. Even worse is to speak about one's physical relationship.
- Express your love often and make her feel wanted. According to Rasûlullâh ﷺ, the mercy of Allâh ﷻ pours on a couple when the husband glances at his wife with love and pleasure and she reciprocates by glancing at him with love and pleasure.
- Laugh and joke with her within Shar'î limits. Nabî ﷺ used to engage in light-hearted conversation with his wives.
- Compliment your wife on her dressing. If you do not approve of any aspect of her dressing, then instead of rebuking her, rather explain to her in a gentle and loving manner your likes and dislikes. *Just as you would like to see her smartly dressed, you too*

should dress smartly for her (all within the confines of the sharî'ah).

- Share in the upkeep and maintenance of the home. Doing household chores is a *sunnah* of Nabî ﷺ that breeds humility and displays compassion and kindness. Nabî ﷺ assisted in household chores. Examples of this are cleaning, sweeping, laying the food-cloth, looking after the children.
- Learn to tolerate slight misbehaviour, or displeasing little acts committed by your wife. Don't react violently by meeting out injustice and cruelty upon her with verbal and physical abuse. Never take her curse. Don't break your promises, crush all expectations and become an oppressor, a tyrant and a blackmailer. Unfortunately, many of our sisters bear untold misery and suffer in silence, day in and day out for years on end, having none to turn to besides Allâh ﷻ. Remember oh husband, when that lonely, broken heart cannot tolerate anymore and those hands rise up complaining to none other than Allâh ﷻ, then rest assured that her tears and pain will not go unanswered. Nabî ﷺ said, "Beware the curse of the oppressed person, since there is no veil between it and Allâh ﷻ." Allâh ﷻ says to the oppressed person, "I will assist you, even though it be after some time."
- Endeavour to change her habits like carelessness, laziness, etc. with advice and admonition. This must be given tactfully, with wisdom and patience. **Rule with love and never with the iron fist.** It is among her rights upon you that you tolerate her. Nabî ﷺ has said that a woman is created from a crooked rib and there is therefore crookedness in her character. If you try to straighten her, you will destroy her. Therefore, take benefit from her together with her crookedness.

- Live with her and speak in the manner that you would want someone to treat your own sister or daughter. If you dislike some qualities in them, they possess others pleasing to you. Look at these qualities. No one is perfect. Remember the grass always seems greener on the other side.
- When you are overcome by anger and wish to physically or verbally abuse her, then remember that Allâh ﷻ, whose trust she is, possesses greater power than you do. Immediately move away from that place, drink water and recite *ta'awudh*. If possible, make *wudû'*. Remember that after the expression of every bout of anger, there is regret. Never discuss a problem in the state of anger. Calm down first.
- *Learn to forgive your wife- Forgive her as many times as you would like Allâh ﷻ to forgive you for your errors. Remember the English adage "To err is human, to forgive is Divine."*
- Regard your wife's parents as your own, address them politely and treat them kindly as you would treat your own parents. Accord them the same respect and honour as your own parents. *(Refer to rights of parents elsewhere in this publication.)*
- *Learn to communicate constructively.* Make a resolution that at the time of a problem you would sit down and discuss in a dignified manner, without raising voices or being abusive; or you will seek advice from someone you both can confide in.
- You cannot choose not to communicate-even your silence and body language can send important messages. However, they may be misinterpreted and could cause more harm.

- Misunderstandings and minor differences should not be suppressed. Rather discuss them in an amicable manner; else this could ultimately lead to a broken marriage (Allâh ﷻ save us.)
- **Learn to admit your mistakes. This is a sign of humility. Do not attempt to justify your mistakes with lame excuses.**
- Don't ever argue in public or in front of the children. This can affect the children psychologically and could prove detrimental to the marriage.
- In a serious conflict, call in arbitrators from both sides and let the matter be solved amicably.
- **Spend quality time with your wife and children.** The time spent with them is an act of *'ibâdat* (worship). Apart from religious activities and necessary business activities, devote yourself to your family. Insha-Allâh, it will reap excellent dividends.
- Control your tongue at all times. Remember that wounds afflicted by swords may heal, but the wounds afflicted by the tongue very seldom heal.
- Never compare nor mention the beauty, character or qualities of other women to your wife. This is extremely insensitive and may cause jealousy, suspicion and unnecessary doubts in her mind. Accept your wife for what she is and do not cast lustful glances at other women. By doing so, *shaytân* will beautify the form of these other women. When a woman emerges from her home, *shaytân* beautifies her in the eyes of men. By controlling one's gazes, one's love for his wife will increase and one will attain the sweetness of *imân*.

- Do not keep in touch or communicate with any female acquaintances from the past, even if they are 'just good friends'. This is extremely detrimental to the marriage and forbidden.
- Nabî ﷺ said, "The most detestable of lawful things by Allâh ﷻ is *talâq* (divorce). Don't abuse this responsibility of issuing *talâq*, given to you by Allâh ﷻ. *Talâq* has been allowed as a last resort after all avenues of reconciliation have been exhausted and if the marriage has broken down and there is no other way out.
- Never use the word '*talâq*' or 'divorce' neither in jest nor in anger. If the need arises, seek the advice of an 'âlim or muftî before resorting to divorce.
- Exercise patience. Never make hasty decisions which you will regret later. "Allâh is with those who exercise patience."
- If your wife is troubled with worries or is depressed, then be sympathetic and encourage her to discuss the problem with you. Make *du'â* for her. Be an anchor of support and a pillar of strength for her by practically expressing your moral support. This will Insha-Allâh make her truly appreciate your heartfelt concern for her.
- Remember that your wife has made the great sacrifice of leaving the confines of her parent's home and her near and dear ones to come and spend the rest of her life with you- a life of the unknown. This she does with great hopes and expectations. Do not destroy them. Fulfil all these requisites which you have made binding on yourself through marriage. Appreciate and value these sacrifices. Allâh ﷻ will surely reward you in this world and the hereafter.
- Never demand back any gift given to your wife, even if the marriage ends in divorce. It is totally forbidden to repossess gifts given at the time of marriage or at any other time.

- Never allow your wife to mix with other strange men. This will severely harm your marriage. The ḥadīth describes a man who allows his wife to talk and freely mix with other men as a ‘*dayyūth*’ (cuckold). You too should abstain from talking unnecessarily to strange women.
- Strange (*ghayr-mahram*) in the *sharī’ah* refers to all people with whom marriage is permissible in Islām. Included in these people are cousins, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, parent’s brothers and sisters spouses, father and mother-in-law’s brothers and sisters, etc. Nabī ﷺ said that the brother-in-law is death. The cases where an illicit relationship was established in family circles are very many and the consequences are disastrous. Never trust the *nafs*.
- It is your Islāmic obligation to be the breadwinner of the family. Never shirk in your responsibility and unduly burden your wife with the onerous task of supporting your family. This unnecessary strain on her will be a cause of great sorrow, and you will be answerable to Allāh ﷻ for neglecting your fundamental duty to your family. A sign of Qiyāmah is that men will bring their womenfolk into their businesses.

ADVICE TO WIVES

Nabî ﷺ said, “The woman who offers her five times salâh, fasts in the month of Ramadân, protects her honour and respect, and obeys her husband has the choice of entering Jannah from whichever door she wishes to enter from.”

Nabî ﷺ said, “The woman who passes away in such a state that her husband is happy with her will enter Jannah.”

Nabî ﷺ said, “Were I to command anyone to prostrate to anyone besides Allâh ﷻ, I would have commanded the woman to prostrate to her husband. If the husband orders the wife to carry the boulders of one mountain to the next, and then to a third, she will have to do this.”

- Obey your husband in all permissible matters. This will draw the mercy of Allâh ﷻ. Nabî ﷺ said, “The best of women is she who makes her husband feel happy when he glances at her; she obeys him when he instructs her and she does not oppose him in regard to herself and her wealth by doing what he dislikes.”
- When your husband enters the home, always make *salâm* cheerfully and give him a warm affectionate smile, no matter how difficult your day may have been. Similarly when leaving home in the morning, make a point of kissing your husband and make *salâm*. *Salâm* is a means of engendering great love and happiness in the home.
- If you had a difficult or tiring day, try to appear cheerful. Do not make a point of making your husband aware as soon as he enters the house. This could cause him to become angry. Gradually try to win his compassion and sympathy.

- You should abstain from all things and every form of behaviour that find disfavour with the husband. Acquaint yourself with the moods and act accordingly, to cultivate his pleasure. Do not increase his worries. Strive to become a source of comfort and peace for him.
- Endeavour to eat and drink from the same utensil. Sometimes place a morsel of food in each other's mouth (not only to be practised when newly-wed), this will increase mutual love. One will be rewarded for this.
- Keep the home, children and (most important) yourself neat and tidy when he enters the home. This will enhance his confidence in you. A neglected home could affect his mood adversely.
- Try to complete your household chores early and quickly so that you can spend quality time with your husband and children.
- Do not disclose your husband's secrets or faults to either family members or friends. Always conceal one another's faults. Even worse is to speak about one's physical relationship.
- Be prepared for him at meal times, as the heat of hunger is very often inflammable. Remember the adage, "A hungry man is an angry man."
- Do not mingle and speak to strange men. This will severely harm your marriage. Never allow any strange man to enter your house in the absence of your husband; no matter how well you or your husband knows him. Strange (*ghayr-mahram*) in the *sharī'ah* refers to all people with whom marriage is permissible in Islām. Included in these people are cousins, brothers-in-law, parent's sister's spouses, father and mother-in-law's brothers, etc. Nabî ﷺ

said that the brother-in-law is death. The cases where an illicit relationship was established in family circles are very many and the consequences are disastrous. Never trust the *nafs*. *Shaytân* runs through the veins of man.

- It is the wife's obligatory duty to beautify and adorn herself only for her husband. It is forbidden for her to adorn herself for all and sundry, when leaving the house. A hadîth states, "A woman who applies perfume and passes by a gathering is like an adulteress."
- Nabî ﷺ said, "It is not permissible for any woman to keep an (optional) fast without her husband's permission."
- Never compare nor mention the handsomeness, character, wealth or generosity of other men to your husband. This is extremely insensitive and may cause jealousy, suspicion and unnecessary doubts in his mind. Accept your husband for what he is and do not cast lustful glances at other men. By doing so, *shaytân* will beautify the form of these other men. By controlling one's gazes, love for the husband will increase and one will attain the sweetness of *imân*.
- Do not keep in touch or communicate with any male acquaintances from the past, even if they are 'just good friends'. This is extremely detrimental to the marriage and forbidden.
- *Learn to communicate constructively*. Make a resolution that at the time of a problem you would sit down and discuss in a dignified manner, without raising voices or being abusive; or you will seek advice from someone you both can confide in.
- You cannot choose not to communicate-even your silence and body language can send important messages. However, they may be misinterpreted and could cause more harm.

- Misunderstandings and minor differences should not be suppressed. Rather discuss them in an amicable manner; else this could ultimately lead to a broken marriage (Allâh ﷻ save us.)
- If you are overcome by anger, then immediately move away from that place, drink water and recite *ta'awud*. If possible, make *wudû'*. Never discuss a problem in the state of anger. Calm down first.
- Don't ever argue in public or in front of the children. This can affect the children psychologically and could prove detrimental to the marriage.
- In a serious conflict, call in arbitrators from both sides and let the matter be solved amicably.
- Exercise patience. Never make hasty decisions which you will regret later. "Allâh is with those who exercise patience."
- Control your tongue at all times. One of the main reasons for break up of marriages is the misuse of the tongue. Thereafter you will regret for the rest of your life. Nabî ﷺ said, "He who keeps silent is saved." Remember that wounds afflicted by swords may heal, but the wounds afflicted by the tongue very seldom heal.
- *Learn to admit your mistakes. This is a sign of humility. Do not attempt to justify your mistakes with lame excuses.*
- Nabî ﷺ said, "The woman who asks her husband for a divorce (without a valid reason), the fragrance of Jannah becomes unlawful for her."

- Respect, and honour your husband's parents as your own, address them politely and treat them kindly as you would treat your own parents. For the sake of your own happiness and for the sake of your husband, it is essential to maintain a good relationship with the in-laws.
- Regard his family as yours. Never insult his family nor use past events or his background to hurt him. You can never acquire the love of your husband if you attempt to disrupt his relationship with his mother, father, brothers, sisters and other relatives. Disruption of family ties is amongst the worst of major sins, and invites the wrath of Allâh ﷻ.
- Never regard your obedience and service to your husband in mundane acts as insignificant. In fulfilling his wishes, you are obeying the command of Allâh ﷻ who has made incumbent upon you total obedience to your husband (in permissible matters). Nabî ﷺ said, "O women, look. Your husband is either your Jannah or Jahannum."
- The reward of a woman's activities within the confines of her home is clearly seen in the reply of Nabî ﷺ to a woman who requested to participate in jihâd. Nabî ﷺ said, "Convey to any woman whom you meet, that obedience to the husband and acknowledging his rights are equal to jihâd. However, few among you do so."
- Nabî ﷺ said, "When a woman leaves home without her husband's permission, then all the angels in the skies and entire universe curse her for this act until she returns home."
- Do not be demanding and a person who imposes her will upon her husband. This leads to serious conflicts. Learn to request politely, rather than demand.

- Do not feel shy to compliment your husband. Make him feel important and win him over with kind words. Adopt a cheerful appearance-this will ignite the face of even a gloomy husband. On the other hand, nagging will produce the adverse effect.
- Your expression of pleasure and appreciation for the 'little gifts' he brings for you will be a source of great happiness and pleasure for him.
- Nabî ﷺ said, "When a husband calls his wife to bed (at night for sexual relations) and she refuses (without any valid *shar'î* reason), then the angels curse her till the morning."
- Ingratitude is a common malady amongst women. Nabî ﷺ once addressing the womenfolk said that the majority of the inmates of Jahannum will be women because of their cursing in abundance and ingratitude to their husbands.
- Never yell at your husband, especially in public. You will hurt his ego. Do not become his mouthpiece- if he is asked a question, let him answer it himself. Do not make decisions for him, nor interrupt his discussions.
- If your husband is troubled with worries or is depressed, then be sympathetic and encourage him to discuss the problem with you. Make *du'â'* for him. Be an anchor of support and a pillar of strength for him, by practically expressing your moral support. This will Insha-Allâh make him truly appreciate your heartfelt concern for him.
- If you require extra money, ask politely; keeping in mind his financial status. Refrain from making unreasonable and extravagant demands on him. Maintain the household budget

within your means. Do not express displeasure when he is unable to fulfil your lavish demands.

- *Learn to forgive him. Remember the English adage 'To err is human, to forgive is Divine.'*
- Show him your trust and do not pry into his affairs. Do not ask too many questions. Safeguard his assets, he will have great trust in you.
- Never demand back any gift given to your spouse, even if the marriage ends in divorce. It is totally forbidden to repossess gifts given at the time of marriage or at any other time.

A marriage, no matter how rosy it seems at the outset, will sometimes be faced with problems and difficulties, like weeds in an unattended garden. If we nip them in the bud (i.e. discuss and resolve them) when they surface, then we can foster a happy married relationship and make the bond of love stronger.

However, if we ignore these initial stumbling blocks and pretend they do not exist, then they may increase and Allâh forbid, they may become so deep-rooted that attempts to remedy them later on may fail. Even if they are resolved, they could still taint the love and affection of the couple for many years to come, and make life very unpleasant.

May Allâh ﷻ make our marriages filled with strong imân, everlasting good health, contentment, joy, happiness, prosperity and pious children. May Allâh ﷻ instil love and mercy within our hearts for one another. May He grant us both the ability to fulfil His commands, discharge each other's rights and emulate the beautiful example of Nabî ﷺ. Âmîn.

[Abridged and edited from 'Do's and Don't's of a Successful Marriage' by Moulânâ Rafîque Vally and 'The Perfect Knot' by Nûrul Huda]

ADVICE TO PARENTS

Allâh ﷻ states in the Qur'ân, "O you who believe, save yourselves and your families from the fire of hell." Just as one generally strives to fulfill his child's worldly needs, here Allâh ﷻ reminds us to fulfill their spiritual needs also. Nabî ﷺ said that every one of us is a shepherd and we will be questioned regarding our flock. We need to fulfill their worldly as well as spiritual needs to be absolved of this trust we have been granted.

Islâm provides a complete set of rights for children from the foetal stage until maturity and obliges the society to fulfill them. These rights guarantee the protection and healthy development of the child.

In the time of Hadrat 'Umar ؓ, a man came to complain about his son to him. The man said, "My son does not obey me." He asked why and the man replied, "Whenever he speaks to me, he does not obey me." When the boy was summoned by Hadrat 'Umar ؓ, his son asked, "What are my rights from my parents?" Hadrat 'Umar ؓ replied, referring to Nabî ﷺ "To be given a good name, to be taught the Qur'ân and to have a good mother chosen for you." The son said: "He chose a prostitute as my mother, called me "batt"(cut off) and has never taught me anything from the Qur'ân," Hadrat 'Umar ؓ said to the father: "How can you expect your rights to be fulfilled if you do not fulfill that of your son's?"

Remember that as you do, so will be done on you. Nabî ﷺ said, "Be good to your parents, your children will be good to you."

Many Muslim parents are not aware of their duties and obligations

towards their children and hence cannot fulfill the divine rights of their children. Here are some rights of children which parents are obliged to fulfill according to the *sharī'ah* until their children reach maturity.

1. Food: parents are obliged to feed their children *halâl* and healthy food. During pregnancy, the mother is obliged to eat good food, as it is the right of the foetus that the food she consumes does not harm it. Ensure that the child drinks the milk of a pious, religious woman. Milk has a great effect in the life of a person. Do not give junk food to save yourself from the responsibility placed on you.

2. Shelter: Children must be provided with adequate shelter from their parents.

3. Protection: It is obligatory for parents to protect their children from any danger and from any un-Islâmic i.e. kufr concepts or thoughts whether this takes the form of information from the television, influence at school or college, in the streets or any medium. Nabî ﷺ said, "Every child is born on the natural religion. Its parents later on make it a Jew, Christian or a pagan." Do not allow the child to look at books that contain love stories, stories that are contrary to the *sharī'ah*, stories that are obscene or that have no benefit, love poems, etc. Give those books that cover the different aspects of the *dîn*, and books that cover the necessary aspects of this world. The habit of watching games, matches, etc. should **not** be inculcated in the child. Safeguard your child from speaking or mixing with children who have evil habits, who are not interested in learning, who always wear stylish clothes or eat extravagant dishes.

4. Medication: Parents must ensure that their children are given adequate medication to protect them from illness and to treat them when they are sick.

5. Clothing: Children must be clothed in an appropriate manner. The parents must ensure the distinction between male and female, in the way they dress their children. Keep him clean, neat and tidy because one remains healthy in this way. Do not beautify and adorn the child excessively. If the child is a boy, do not lengthen the hair on his head. Try to inculcate the quality of wearing white clothing. If it is a girl, do not make her wear any jewellery as long as she does not reach the age where she has to observe *pardah*. This is because this will pose a danger to her life. The other reason is that it is not a good habit to create a love for jewellery in a girl's mind when she is still so young. Parents should never allow their children to wear the clothing of non-believers, even if they are young. From a small age, they should be taught to wear the clothing of the pious. Girls and boys from a small age should be taught to cover their hair. Do not cut their hair according to the fashion of the non-believers. Whomsoever we imitate, we will begin thinking and acting like them.

6. Islâmic knowledge: From a young age, the child must be taught the oneness and greatness of Allâh ﷻ. Recite the name of Allâh ﷻ so much to him that these are the first words to emerge from his mouth. At 7 years of age a child reaches the age of distinction and must be taught what he needs to know about *islâh* before they reach maturity e.g. they must be taught how to perform *salâh*, that backbiting is forbidden, that they must work to establish Allâh's ﷻ *dîn*, rational proof of Allâh's ﷻ existence etc. They will be asked to pray and fast at 7 and at 10 they will be ordered to pray and fast and the parents can physically discipline them if they do not obey. (It is prohibited to hit the face, head, and private parts or to leave a mark. Similarly a person should never hit in anger. After one's anger subsides think of a suitable punishment and implement it.) Once he reaches the age wherein he can go to *madrasah*, first teach him to recite the Noble Qur'ân. As far as is possible, make him learn under a religious-minded teacher. Don't ever allow him to absent himself

from going to *madrasah*. Set aside certain times in which you narrate stories of the pious to him. Nabî ﷺ said, "The best gift a father can give to his son is good manners."

7. Once the child returns from the *madrasah*, permit him to play around in order to occupy him and so that he does not become dull-headed. However, the games must be such that there is no sin in playing them and there is no fear of physical injury. Do not give the child money to buy fireworks, musical instruments and similar needless items which amount to wasting of money.

8. Marriage: Parents must ensure their children marry partners with good *dîn* and they must not refuse unreasonably. It is narrated that Nabî ﷺ said: "People marry for four reasons: wealth, lineage, beauty and good *din*. Choose the one with good *din*, else you will be disgraced". Nabî ﷺ said: "If the one whose *dîn* and character you are pleased with proposes for your daughter, let them marry, otherwise there will be great mischief." Nabî ﷺ said, "Whoever has a child, then let him give him a good name and teach him manners. When he becomes mature, then marry him. If he does not get him married and his child commits a sin, then the sin is also on his father." Another hadith states, "It is mentioned in the *Tawrah* that whoever's daughter reaches the age of 12 and he does not get her married, then she commits a sin, the sin will be on the father." In today's time of immorality, we can see the wisdom behind this command. If the child wants to get married and is mentally matured, then parents should not delay. It is recommended to obey your parents in who they choose for you but it is not compulsory.

9. The sensitivity of the rights of parents over children was well understood by the sahâbah ؓ. It is narrated that many of them did not ask their children for anything lest they disobeyed them and were subsequently sinful.

10. Nurture and raise your children under your watchful and affectionate eyes. Inculcate good habits and Islâmic morals from a tender age. It is imperative that a child grows up in the 'lap' of the mother where his/her very first education commences. Do not abandon and assign your innocent children to the care of maids and nannies, who in most cases utterly lack good morals and character. These disbelievers are devoid of Islâmic morals and are immersed in *kuf*r and impurity. This neglect and abandonment of your compulsory duty of personally raising your children will cause great harm to the children morally and spiritually. Remember that the impressions made on a young innocent child are imprinted in the mind.

11. Have the habit of handing over the responsibility of distributing food, clothing, money, etc. that is to be given to poor people to your children. Similarly, give them the task of distributing food, sweets, etc. to brothers, sisters and others. This is to inculcate the practice of generosity.

12. If a child insists on having something, do not fulfil all his wishes, else he will become spoilt.

13. Always inculcate a hatred for the following actions in your child, i.e. teach him to hate the following acts: (a) becoming angry, (b) speaking lies, (c) envying someone, (d) stealing, (e) carrying tales, (f) defending whatever he does or says, (g) to unnecessarily "make up" stories, (h) speaking excessively without any benefit, (i) laughing unnecessarily or laughing excessively, (j) cheating or deluding someone, (k) not thinking about or not differentiating between good and bad. If these acts are found in him, stop him immediately and warn him.

14. If he breaks something or begins to hit someone, punish him accordingly so that he does not repeat such acts. Loving the child,

consoling him or allowing him to commit such acts always causes the child to become "lost" or spoilt.

15. Do not allow the child to sleep very late. The habit of waking up early should be inculcated.

16. Always teach your children some sort of hobby or trade which will help them at the time of need or necessity whereby they can support their families. Teach girls to write to the extent that they are able to write necessary letters and also work out the expenses of the house. The habit of doing their own work should be inculcated in the children so that they do not become dependent and lazy. You should order them to lay out their own beds at night and to get up early in the morning and neaten their beds again. They should keep their clothes neatly. Clothes that become undone or torn should be stitched by themselves. Clothes should be kept neatly.

17. You should order the girls to watch the cooking, sewing, threading, dying clothes, and all the other work that is carried out at home so that they will also learn these things. It is the duty of the mother to teach her daughters these things. Many women foolishly believe that after she marries, she will do so. This can lead to serious problems.

18. When the child does something good, praise him, kiss him, and reward him so that he will feel happy. When he commits an evil act, call him aside in privacy and make him understand that he has committed an evil act and that others will think badly of him, and that whoever else comes to know of it will also think badly of him. You should warn him against committing such an act again and explain to him that good children do not do such things. If he repeats that act, punish him appropriately.

19. It is the duty of the mother to create respect for the father in the child's heart.

20. Do not allow the child to do anything secretly.

21. Set aside some strenuous work for the children which will keep them healthy, energetic and which will not allow laziness to overtake them. If it is a boy, he should do gymnastics, weight-lifting or walking for a few kilometres. As for girls, it is necessary for them to work in the kitchen. The benefit of this is that they will not regard such work to be below their dignity.

22. Inculcate the habit of humility in them. Their manner of speaking, walking, conversing, etc. should be such that they do not become boastful. They should be taught humility to such an extent that they should not even sit with their classmates and boast.

23. Teach them the etiquette and *sunan* of eating, sleeping, relieving themselves etc.

ADVICE TO MOTHER-IN-LAWS

- Bear in mind that your daughter-in-law is a human being with aspirations and feelings. She has made a great sacrifice to come and serve your son for the rest of her life. Treat her like your own daughter. Remember when you were a daughter-in-law. As you desired to be treated, treat her. Remove the jealousy which generally comes into the heart that someone new has come and taken over my son who I brought up with great pain.
- Give gifts. This will create love.
- Do not demand control of your son's money. It is for him to use in an appropriate manner.
- Never compare one's daughter-in-law with another, or with your daughters. Every person is different and has different abilities. Look at the good in everyone.
- Overlook faults and errors. Your daughter-in-law is still naïve. In all likelihood, you made the same errors when you were young.
- If she lives with you, do not expect her to do everything in the house. However, if the kitchen is one, then some 'ulemâ' have stated that it will be better if the mother-in-law hands it over completely to her daughter-in-law, if she is happy to accept this responsibility. If not, then rather have turns in the kitchen, because generally problems start in the kitchen. Everyone's ways and methods are different.
- Think before you speak. What you say to your daughter, you cannot say to your daughter-in-law, since your daughter has natural love for you whereas her love for you will slowly have to

be cultivated. Even if she errs, be careful as to how you correct her. Sometimes, even a wrong word, however innocent it may be, can cause problems. It is a delicate situation.

- Never discuss your one daughter-in-law with the other or discuss them with even your own sisters, daughters or best friends. If a secret cannot stay in your mouth, how do you expect it to remain in someone else's? Discussing with others is just looking for problems. If you have a problem, speak directly to the one concerned.
- Learn from your mistakes. If you have said something once that created a problem, make sure you never repeat it.
- Be simple. No one is perfect. Do not be unnecessarily fussy about things that are not really a life-or-death situation.
- Be generous in praising their cooking, baking, etc. even though it is not up-to your standards.
- Never drag your daughter-in-law into any disagreement between yourself and your son. If you are upset with your son for any reason, there is no need to pass the message via your daughter-in-law or get upset with her. Speak directly to your son.

ADVICE TO DAUGHTER-IN-LAWS

- Accept your in-laws as your own parents. You have them to thank for the wonderful man who has become your life partner.
- Don't compare them to your parents to show your spouse how inadequate his parents are.
- If your in-laws give a gift, appreciate it and do not pass unkind remarks.
- Praise them often in the presence of your husband, family, and friends. That way, even though you have not grown to like them as of yet, you will in time.
- Realize that they are also humans. They have their faults. You would never disown your parents for their flaws, so how can you expect the same from your husband's parents? Hide their faults. Allâh ﷻ will conceal your faults in the hereafter.
- Lower your expectations. As much as you might feel that marriage is a huge adjustment to you, having their son married is an adjustment for them too. Their son no longer belongs exclusively to them. You all will now have to learn to share.
- Treat them respectfully. A bad word creates a permanent rift.
- Be thankful, rather than jealous, when your children show them love. Would you deprive your own children of the love of their grandparents, confining them only to the love of your own parents because of jealousy? How would you feel if your brother's wife did the same with your own parents?

- Do all you can to make them feel at home when they come by for a visit. When you visit them, assist them as much as possible. They should feel pleased when you come.
- Treat every instruction of your mother-in-law like an instruction of your own mother. Give her pleasure precedence even though she may ill-treat you. Speak to her with respect and not as you speak to an equal. Never say anything if she scolds you. Never speak harshly to her.
- Never speak ill of them in the presence of your children. If they have overstepped the boundaries, discuss this in private with your husband.
- Never drag your husband into an argument between your mother-in-law and yourself. By doing this, you place your husband in a very precarious position. Should you have any issue you need to address with your mother-in-law, do so in a respectful manner. By holding mature adult discussions, an amicable agreement can be reached.
- Be a giver instead of a demander. Always remember that it is sheer folly to always go around demanding that your rights be fulfilled. Rather, concentrate on fulfilling the rights of others. In so doing, you will find that those around you will automatically begin to fulfill your rights.
- If your in-laws have no one else to reside with, offer them to reside with you. This is more so when the father-in-law passes away. By being of service to her, you will attain lofty stages in the hereafter, since service grants one Allâh ﷻ Himself. Never be selfish and give your husband a choice to choose between his mother and you. Remember, as you do, so will you be recompensed. One day, you too will reach old-age and will

require assistance. Nabî ﷺ said, “Whichever young person honors an old person due to his age, Allâh ﷻ will create someone who will honor him in old age.”

- If your in-laws oppress you, firstly turn to Allâh ﷻ and make du'â' to Him. Speak to husband in a polite manner, and inform him. Learn to forgive and forget. Nabî ﷺ said, “Allâh ﷻ increases a person in honor who forgives. Whoever humbles himself for Allâh ﷻ, Allâh ﷻ will raise him.”
- Always encourage your husband to keep good ties with his family members, especially parents and brothers and sisters. Many brothers and sisters become estranged after marriage due to the stories carried by the wives to their husbands. Behave respectfully to all elders like the wives of the husband's elder brother. If younger, be kind and loving and assist as far as possible in their work.
- Recompense comes from Allâh ﷻ. Give and give and do not ever expect something in return. Always remember that the best recompense is always from Allâh ﷻ. Allâh ﷻ says, 'And what is the reward of good except good?' [Ar-Rahmân 55:60].

RIGHTS OF NEIGHBOURS

Rasûlullâh ﷺ said,

- Jibra'îl عليه السلام emphasised so much regarding the rights of neighbours until I thought that the neighbour will also be included in the inheritance.
- On the Day of Qiyâmah, the first thing to be reclaimed will be regarding neighbours.
- Whoever desires to have love for Allâh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ, and that Allâh ﷻ and His Rasûl ﷺ love him, then whenever he speaks, he must be truthful, if a trust is kept by him, he should return it, and he should show good conduct to his neighbours.
- Hadrat 'Abdullâh bin 'Umar رضي الله عنه commanded his slave, "O son! When you prepare meat, first give your Jewish neighbours." Someone asked, "Jews! May Allâh ﷻ reward you!" He said, "I heard Rasûlullâh ﷺ giving so much emphasis on the rights of the neighbour that we thought perhaps he will receive a portion of inheritance."

Fulfil your Neighbour's Rights

Sayyidina Muawiyah bin Huyayy رضي الله عنه narrates that he asked Nabî ﷺ to inform him of his obligations to his neighbour. Nabî ﷺ said, "Visit him when he falls ill, attend his funeral when he passes away, grant him a loan when he seeks one, conceal his errors, congratulate him on every good, and console him when he is afflicted with trials. Similarly, do not raise your building higher than his, thereby preventing fresh air from reaching his home, and do not cause him inconvenience with the aroma of your foods, unless you send food to him."

Do Not Cause Harm to Them

Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, "By Allâh, he is not a believer. By Allâh, he is not a believer. By Allâh, he is not a believer." Someone asked, "Who, O Rasûlullâh ﷺ?" Nabî ﷺ said, "The one whose neighbour is not free

from his harm.” In another hadîth Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “The one whose neighbour is not safe from his harm will not enter Jannah.” Hadrat Ka’b bin Mâlik ؓ states that one man came to Nabî ﷺ and said, “I am living in a certain tribe. My closest neighbours are causing me a lot of difficulty.” On hearing this, Nabî ﷺ said to Hadrat Abû Bakr, Umar and Ali to call out at the door of the masjid, “Neighbours are forty houses. The one whose neighbours are not free from his *bawa’iq* will not enter Jannah.” Someone asked, “What is *bawa’iq*?” Nabi ﷺ replied, “Causing harm.”

Be Concerned if He is in Financial Difficulties

Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “He is not a believer who eats to his fill while his neighbour remains hungry.”

Exchange Gifts and Do Not Despise Any Gift Presented to You

Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “O Muslim women! No neighbour should despise her neighbour even if she sends a burnt hoof of a goat as a gift.” The term, ‘hoof of an animal’ is used as an exaggeration, in order to exhort us to send gifts regularly to neighbours, even though they are insignificant. In another hadîth, Nabî ﷺ said, “When anyone cooks a pot of food, he should increase the gravy so that he can give some to his neighbour.” Sending food to the neighbours now and then was a noble habit of previous Muslims. This creates mutual love and bonding.

Judge Yourself

Rasûlullâh ﷺ said, “When you hear your neighbour saying that you have done good, then you have really done good and if you hear him saying that your conduct is evil, then in reality your conduct is evil.” Mutual relations are based on having concern and goodness for each other. Thus having concern, worry and assisting one’s neighbour who lives with one is logical. If we fulfil his rights, he will be inclined to fulfil our rights. This will lead to a life of peace and comfort for both parties. When this chain of goodness and concern passes from

neighbour to neighbour, it will encompass the entire society, due to which peace will be created in the entire world and the usurping of rights will be terminated.

FAMILY TIES

Islam has placed tremendous emphasis on the establishment, maintenance and preservation of family kinship. Various Qur'anic verses and Ahadith instruct Muslims to be kind, merciful, affectionate and caring towards parents and relatives.

Although almost all religions advocate maintenance of family ties, Islam has taken it to unprecedented heights. A Muslim is commanded to be kind even to his non-Muslim relatives. Similarly, he is required to be kind to those relatives who are unpleasant or harsh towards him.

Maintaining the bonds of kinship (silatur rahim) enjoys extraordinary importance in Islam. Conversely, severing family ties (qat'ur rahim) can lead one to a disastrous end.

Due to the importance Islam has accorded to maintaining family ties, the rewards and benefits of doing so are indeed great. Similarly, neglect and severing family ties can have disastrous consequences on a person's life. It therefore becomes imperative that every Muslim is soundly educated regarding this important obligation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY TIES

Mutual dependence is an important facet of human existence on earth. Mankind could not have survived without this co-existence. The fact that Allâh ﷻ created Hawa ﷺ as a partner for Hazrat Aadam ﷺ is a classical example to prove the need for interdependence. This reality is manifest in every facet of human existence.

Communication, interaction and interdependence between human beings is an essential requirement for a normal and harmonious

society. At every point in one's life a person will be interacting with other people. Generally, the people one will come into contact with more often are his family folk. Due to the frequent contact resulting from a family relationship, it is imperative that one is always on good terms with family members.

The importance of maintaining harmonious relationships with all family members is highlighted in the following verse: ***“And fear Allâh through whose medium you ask one another (for your rights) and be mindful of your relatives.”*** (Surah Nisa)

In this verse, the instruction of keeping family ties follows directly after the instruction of fearing Allâh ﷻ, hence highlighting its importance in the sight of Allâh ﷻ. In another verse it is mentioned, ***“And worship Allâh and do not assign partners with Him and be favourable unto parents and family members and the orphans and the destitute and the near neighbour and the distant neighbour and the traveller and your slaves. And Allâh does not love one who is haughty and proud.”*** (Surah Nisaa)

The great number of Ahadith that instruct family kinship emphasizes the matter even further. ***“Whoever believes in Allâh and the Last Day, let him maintain the bonds of kinship.”*** (Bukhari)

FACTORS THAT MAINTAIN FAMILY UNITY

Regular Visits – In an era when the words “no time” have become a formidable cliché, Muslims are duty bound to keep close contact with family relatives by visiting each other regularly. The trend today is to visit someone if there is some material or worldly benefit, or only if they keep contact with us. Relatives should be visited solely for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ and to create and maintain muhabbat (love) in the family.

Mutual Assistance – Assisting one's relatives carries two reward; one reward for assisting and one reward for bonding family ties. These

noble qualities will also be a practical means of guidance for the children. In this way family relationships are strengthened and can be maintained for generations. Certain people feel uncomfortable to assist relatives if they require financial help in the form of Zakaat, etc. This manner of thought should be corrected.

Rasulullah ﷺ said, ***“Sadaqah given to a poor person is an ordinary sadaqah, but sadaqah given to a relative serves two purposes: one as a sadaqah and secondly, an act of upholding family kinship.”*** (Tirmizi)

Rasulullah ﷺ said, ***“Whosoever desires to have expansion in his sustenance and a prolonged life, should treat his relatives with kindness.”*** (Bukhari & Muslim)

Abundant Greeting – Increasing salaam to each other creates muhabbat. Rasulallah ﷺ has urged Muslims to spread salaam. Those who initiate salaam are protected from pride and haughtiness.

Exchanging Gifts – Showering relatives with gifts is also an effective method of generating love between people. Rasulallah ﷺ said, ***“Exchange gifts with one another, you will create love and goodwill amongst yourselves.”*** (Abu Ya’laa)

COMMON FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO FAMILY DISSENSION

Marriage Breakdown – This is the single most factor that has disrupted family life and created discord in communities. The separation of two individuals directly impacts on both families, and in this way the discord permeates the entire community.

It is incumbent upon couples to understand the reality and commitment of Nikah and its impact on society. If the couple have no other option but to divorce, this procedure should be carried out in a dignified Shari manner, and any animosity or hard feelings should be minimised.

Business Upheavals – This is also a major contributor to family problems and disunity. Material interests and love for the world take precedence and people do not realise the consequences of their words and actions. Ignorance and authority play a major role, and wealth of the orphans, innocent and weak is usurped. Strict application of Shari laws and co-operation is required in sensitive business issues. At all times the family unity should be maintained as top priority.

Estate Matters – The demise of a family member is sometimes the spark that leads to endless misery for families when the deceased's estate is not distributed correctly. Hence it is imperative for Muslims to keep their financial matters in order, thereby not leaving an opportunity for family discord. Ulama should be consulted in this regard for proper Islamic guidance in the field of Islamic inheritance and estate distribution.

Suspicion and Gossip – These are two major qualities that wreak havoc, burn and destroy the perpetrator inwardly. Mischief is created through false information and opinions about people and families causing disunity and family discord. A believer should at no time engage in backbiting or harbour evil thoughts about others. There are severe warnings of chastisement for people who engage in these sins. May Allâh ﷻ protect us all.

According to a Hadith, ***“One who joins ties when family members are co-operative and returns the same affection cannot be said to be one who joins family ties, rather the one who can truly be termed a person who joins ties is he who upholds and maintains the ties when the other family members have severed ties with him.”*** (Bukhari)

EMPHASIS ON UNITY

The extent to which Islam detests disunity and dissension can be gauged from the following Hadith. Umme Kulsum رضي الله عنها reports that she heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying, ***“He who makes peace between the people by inventing good information or saying good things, is not a liar.”*** (Bukhari)

Speaking lies is a major sin, which invokes the curse of Allâh ﷻ, yet the Shariah has given the concession to speak a “white lie” in order to reconcile a dispute and keep two people on talking terms.

SEVERE WARNINGS FOR THOSE WHO SEVER FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Just as the reward and rank for maintaining family unity is great and fulfilling, similarly the warnings and sin for severing and breaking ties is equally detrimental. Allâh ﷻ has cursed the one severing family ties, ***“And those who break the covenant of Allâh, after its ratification, and sever that which Allâh has commanded to be joined (i.e. they sever the bond of kinship and are not good to their relatives) and work mischief in the land, on them is the curse, and for them is the unhappy home (i.e. Hell)”*** (Surah Ar Rad)

A cursed person is one who is deprived of the mercy of Allâh ﷻ. This sin is punishable in this world as well as in the Hereafter. ***“There is no sin more deserving of having punishment meted out by Allâh to its perpetrator in advance in this world along with what He has for him in the next world than oppression and severing family ties.”***(Tirmizi)

A Hadith highlights the rank and importance of this duty: ***“Rahim (family ties) is a word derived from Allâh’s special quality, Ar Rahman (The Compassionate One). And Allâh says: ‘I shall keep***

connection with him who maintains you and sever connection with him who severs you.” (Bukhari)

A person should love someone solely for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. If there is need to dislike someone for Shari reasons this should also be for the pleasure of Allâh ﷻ. If a person is compelled to sever ties with a family member due to a genuine Shari reason, then the aforementioned warnings will not be applicable.

Family disputes and differences should be resolved early and amicably. Procrastination in resolving family matters can lead to explosive situations. Ulama should be consulted in good faith and the matter should be put forward factually, honestly and sincerely.

(Article extracted from Jamiatul Ulama KZN Website)

CONCLUSION

Faqîh Abû Layth راجع الفوائد has listed the following benefits of aiding relatives and being kind to them:

- ★ It pleases Allâh ﷻ.
- ★ It makes the relatives happy, and in the light of the hadîth, causing happiness to any Muslim is a very rewarding act.
- ★ It pleases the angels.
- ★ Such a person will be praised by fellow Muslims.
- ★ *Shaytân* is grieved by it.
- ★ It causes one’s lifespan to be increased.
- ★ It increases sustenance.
- ★ Such relatives will always supplicate in favour of one.

May Allâh ﷻ grant all of us the ability to fulfil this great command of His. Âmîn!